

Agency Activities and Monitored Issues

Link Operations and Maintenance Satellite Facility

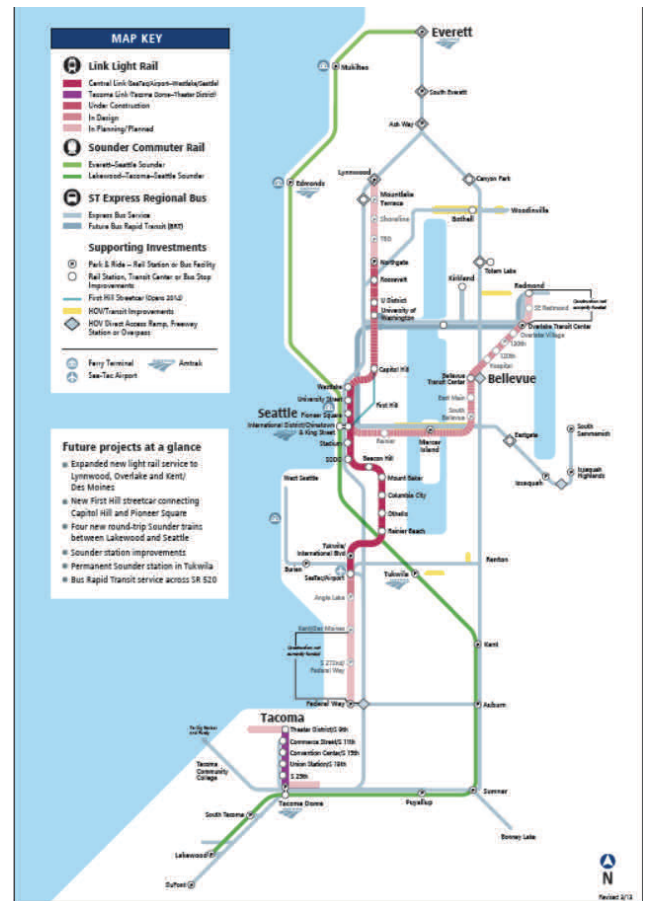
The Sound Transit Board chose a site in Bellevue as the preferred alternative for a new Link light rail operations and maintenance satellite facility.

The facility is needed to store, service, and deploy the growing light rail fleet as the Link system expands from 16 to 50 miles by 2023. The preferred alternative is in Bellevue's Bel-Red corridor west of 120th Avenue NE and adjacent to existing railroad tracks on land that Sound Transit partially owns. The final decision on the location and the facility's general size and scope will be determined after the project's Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is complete.

Proposed 2015 budget unveiled

Sound Transit released its proposed 2015 budget to the Sound Transit Board. The proposed 2015 budget is \$1.2 billion. The agency expects to collect revenues of \$933 million 2015, which is 1.4 percent higher than the 2014 budget, mainly due to higher sales tax revenues, motor vehicle excise tax, and local/state contributions. The operating budget for the year is \$229 million.

In 2015, growth is a major theme and this growth will appear as a record number of passengers, more than 32 million on Sound Transit trains, and buses. Growth will also be visible in the four light rail extensions that will be under construction: Northgate Link, East Link, University Link, and S. 200th Link.



Current and future transit improvements

Clean audit

Sound Transit recently received its 20th clean annual audit on how the Agency manages and spends federal funds. Sound Transit has received no material weakness findings since it began soliciting the audits in 1994.

The audit, conducted by the independent audit firm KPMG, examined financial records and statements, federal award transactions and expenditures, general operations management, internal control systems, and federal assistance received during the audit year.

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Transit Integration Report released

In September Sound Transit Board Chair and King County Executive Dow Constantine, released *Getting There Together*, a joint report on transit integration by Sound Transit and King County Metro Transit.

The report summarizes the progress made since Chair Constantine and the Sound Transit Board directed the agencies to work together more closely to identify opportunities for efficiency.

The opening of light rail to the UW in early 2016, followed by subsequent light rail extensions through 2023, provide opportunities for the agencies to reduce redundancy and streamline services, making it possible to save resources that could then be redeployed elsewhere.

Fare change

The public outreach and comment period opened recently on three fare change options for a potential new low-income fare. The potential low-income adult fare would align with King County Metro's program and would ensure consistent fares for low-income riders. To offset the revenue loss, other Sound Transit fares would increase by 25 cents where the low-income discount is applied. The Sound Transit Board is expected to make a decision on the fares in November.

Pilot parking project

A six-month pilot program testing the use of permits to guarantee the availability of transit station parking spaces ended recently. The program took place at the Mukilteo, Sumner, and Tukwila International Blvd. stations as well as the Issaquah Transit Center.

The program is part of a larger effort to find ways of making sure parking is available for transit users in lots that are becoming increasingly crowded. Under the program, more than 450 qualified applicants purchased permits guaranteeing them parking at the station. Preliminary findings showed a high level of interest in permit parking.

Sounder safeguards

Installation began recently on equipment that will provide additional safeguards for Sounder commuter train operators and passengers. The "Positive Train Control," system warns train operators of potential problems and then automatically slows or stops the train if the operator does not respond. The technology is federally required for all passenger train services in the country.

The work includes modifications to Sounder vehicles, along with upgrades to the signaling system along the tracks. Sound Transit is installing antennas and signaling gear on eight miles of railroad right-of-way between Tacoma and Lakewood. Sound Transit also paid for a portion of the BNSF Railway Company's Positive Train Control system from Tacoma to Everett because Sounder trains also use that line.